

Additional Support for the CNRA:

“I thank Senator Van Hollen and Congressman Sarbanes for your partnership and your work in drafting this legislation to highlight the national significance of the Chesapeake Bay. Annapolis is ready to play its part and I whole-heartedly support this Bill. I would encourage your Congressional colleagues to support its passage also. It offers a unique opportunity to foster access, resources, and economic growth and deliver hugely significant regional and national benefits,” **said Annapolis Mayor Gavin Buckley.**

“The Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation (AAEDC) writes to express our support for the proposed Chesapeake National Recreation Area (CNRA) as part of the National Park System. The Chesapeake National Recreation Area designation achieves multiple policy goals of ecological stewardship, historic and cultural preservation, economic development, and equity. AAEDC appreciates and supports your efforts to deliver resources to one of Anne Arundel’s key economic assets and create a regional amenity that the public can enjoy and celebrate,” **said Anne Arundel County Economic Development Corporation President & CEO Amy Gowan.**

“I am thrilled to join my fellow local, state, and federal elected officials to support the creation of the Chesapeake National Recreation Area, which provides a pathway for better preservation and better access to the Chesapeake Bay,” **said Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman.** “Greater public access would boost our local economy, increase residents’ understanding of our shared history, and underscore our collective duty to protect and preserve this national treasure.”

“The Chesapeake National Recreation Area will tell the stories of the nation’s largest estuary and one of the world’s largest environmental restoration efforts, including the people and communities that have been essential to it,” **said Baltimore City Mayor Brandon M. Scott.** “Baltimore has always made the Chesapeake Bay a central part of our draw as a destination, whether it be our Inner Harbor, our best in the world seafood, or our proximity to some of the most beautiful waterways in the country. Creating the Chesapeake National Recreation Area will just further solidify the Bay as one of our great treasures, aid our efforts to protect it, and strengthen local businesses across our great city.”

“The Chesapeake region features an incredible array of rich historic and cultural resources, and improving and expanding our parks for their exploration and enjoyment is a priority for us in Baltimore County,” **said Baltimore County Executive Johnny Olszewski.** “I fully support and appreciate Senator Van Hollen and Congressman Sarbanes’ efforts to establish a Chesapeake National Recreation Area as a unit of the National Park Service to preserve and promote the natural and recreational amenities which make Baltimore County, and by extension, the entire Chesapeake Region unique.”

“The collaborative nature of the CNRA is commendable. By leveraging partnerships between the National Park Service, states, and localities, the CNRA ensures that existing sites and resources are put to the best use in safeguarding the Bay’s delicate ecosystem. Furthermore, by highlighting the diverse groups of people living around the Chesapeake Bay, the CNRA will foster an

inclusive approach to conservation that respects and cherishes the region's rich cultural heritage,” **said the Charles County Board of Commissioners.**

“This thoughtful and carefully crafted legislation is a win for everyone. It is a smart investment of federal resources that will directly benefit Maryland economically, environmentally, and culturally, while adding the treasure of the Chesapeake as an asset of the National Park System,” **said Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater.**

“Howard County’s proximity to the Chesapeake Bay is part of our identity and we remain committed to responsible, environmental stewardship. As our country’s largest estuary, the Bay deserves the protections and increased federal resources that would come with the Chesapeake National Recreation Area designation,” **said Howard County Executive Calvin Ball.**

“With its rich history, ecological significance, and abundant recreational opportunities, Maryland's Chesapeake Bay is a treasured asset that is vital to our state's heritage, culture and economy. By supporting the establishment of a unified Chesapeake National Recreational Area designation, we can leverage federal resources to help conserve, celebrate and provide access to this important resource, while also driving economic growth through job creation, new business opportunities, and ecotourism. This is a critical opportunity to strengthen our state's economy while preserving and providing access to this remarkable and storied natural resource,” **said Maryland Chamber of Commerce President & CEO Mary D. Kane.**

“A Chesapeake Bay National Recreation Area would provide an incredible opportunity to showcase Maryland's significant cultural, environmental, historical, and natural resources, and provide an international platform for the State of Maryland and the broader Chesapeake Bay watershed. My Administration has worked to preserve our waterways by funding instrumental programs to help enhance and protect the Chesapeake Bay, while prioritizing environmental justice for the low-income communities and communities of color. Historically, these communities in the Chesapeake region often suffer disproportionate impacts of environmental hazards. A NPS designation would help reduce these barriers and provide greater access to all the Chesapeake Bay has to offer while coordinating with local communities to support their needs. I look forward to working together in the effort to enhance, protect and restore this resource so that future generations can enjoy both the beauty and bounty of the Chesapeake Bay,” **said Maryland Governor Wes Moore.**

“Establishing a Chesapeake National Recreational Area is not only a significant step towards safeguarding this invaluable resource, but also an opportunity to foster environmental awareness and promote sustainable recreation. Under the stewardship of our remarkable National Park Service, I am confident this action will highlight the landscape and the national significance of our country’s largest estuary,” **said Maryland State Delegate Dana Jones (D-SD-30A).**

“I strongly encourage Congress to pass the authorization creating the Chesapeake National Recreation Area - the nation’s largest estuary and one of the world’s largest environmental restoration efforts,” **said Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich.** “We in Montgomery County are proud to support this effort and appreciate the advocacy and leadership of Senator Van Hollen and Congressman Sarbanes and the rest of the Maryland Congressional Delegation to improve the environment, economic development, and quality of life for all Marylanders. The

Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and deserves the respect and recognition this designation will provide.”

“We are proud to support legislation that would create a Chesapeake National Recreation Area, helping us protect, preserve, and celebrate the Chesapeake Bay. Designating a Chesapeake National Recreation Area would also boost our regional economy while increasing access to this important area for local residents and visitors from across the country. A national recreation area would be historic for Maryland, and we look forward to working with our federal partners to help tell the story of the Chesapeake Bay,” **said Prince George’s County Executive Angela Alsobrooks.**

“The Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce strongly supports your efforts to establish this National Recreation Area which will foster public access to this national treasure while spurring critical economic growth for the region,” **said Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce President & CEO William Chambers.**

“The CNRA will highlight the key part the Bay played, and continues to play, in the region's economy and the story of watermen and -women who are essential to the economic success and health of the Bay region. This will spark environmentally conscious tourism that supports those in the food, lodging, outdoor recreation, etc.,” **said Somerset County Economic Development Commission Executive Director Daniel Thompson.**

Additional current and former public officials, local governments, and economic development groups supporting the CNRA are: Beach to Bay Heritage Greenway, Calvert County Board of Commissioners, Chestertown Mayor David Foster, Chickahominy Tribe, Easton Mayor Megan Cook, Former Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, Former Virginia Governor Ralph Northam, Greater Salisbury Committee, Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, Maryland State Senator Sarah Elfreth (D-SD-30A/B), Nansemond Tribe, and Rappahannock Tribe Chief Anne Richardson. Letters of support from many of these officials and groups can be found [here](#).

Endorsements of the CNRA Initiative:

“Establishing the CNRA will allow all stories of the watershed, its citizens, and its history to be shared with visitors from across the world. The creation of the CNRA will enhance public understanding of the Bay at participating National Park Service sites and partner sites to tell the story of the outstanding, remarkable, and nationally significant resources of the Bay watershed,” **said Blacks of the Chesapeake Foundation Founder and President Vince Leggett.**

“Creating a Chesapeake National Recreation Area (CNRA) is an idea whose time has come. Our region’s history is as diverse as its people. Yet many of their stories and contributions, particularly those of people of color, are not well known or appreciated. The CNRA would help elevate those untold stories, share them with more people, and foster a sense of collective responsibility for this national treasure. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation thanks Sen. Van Hollen

and Rep. Sarbanes for their leadership on this important legislation. We are proud to support their efforts,” **said Chesapeake Bay Foundation Federal Director Keisha Sedlacek.**

“Thank you, Senator Van Hollen and Congressman Sarbanes, for making a more than 30-year-long dream come true. The Chesapeake Bay is as spectacular as Yellowstone or Yosemite, as great as the Great Smokies and as grand as the Grand Tetons. Establishing the Chesapeake National Recreation Area expands resources for environmental protection, and makes it clear that the United States cherishes the Chesapeake, the birthplace of American identity. As a great gift to future generations, this legislation ensures everyone’s right to visit and recreate on our nation’s largest estuary while balancing the needs of those who live here and depend on the bay for their livelihood,” **said Chesapeake Conservancy President & CEO Joel Dunn.**

“After several years of planning, we are thrilled to see legislation introduced that would create the Chesapeake National Recreation Area. The CRNA would increase diverse public access to the iconic Chesapeake Bay and its many rivers and streams, strengthening the culture of stewardship across the region. Promoting and expanding public access to this national treasure is critical to meeting our clean water goals. Future generations cannot save what they don’t know. Crucially, including the Chesapeake region as a new unit of the National Park System will create opportunities to expand recreational access to water in underserved communities throughout the region and commemorate the rich culture and contributions of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color that have lacked recognition throughout history. We want to thank Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Congressman John Sarbanes (D-MD) for their leadership on the CNRA. We look forward to working with all members of the Chesapeake Bay watershed’s congressional delegation to pass this legislation,” **said Choose Clean Water Coalition Director Mariah Davis.**

“The Southern Maryland National Heritage Area is in full support of the efforts by Senator Van Hollen and Congressman Sarbanes to establish a Chesapeake National Recreation Area. Southern Maryland is a peninsula with over a thousand miles of shoreline, with the Chesapeake Bay on one side and the Malloes Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary on the other side. The establishment of the Chesapeake National Recreation Area combined with the newly designated Southern Maryland National Heritage Area will help ensure that the story of the people of the region, access to the resources of the region, and the cultural stewardship of the region, are a priority for years to come,” **said Destination Southern Maryland Executive Director Lucille Walker.**

“The inclusion of Fort Monroe in this legislation recognizes the significant history and unique location of this property on the Chesapeake Bay,” **said Fort Monroe Authority Executive Director Glenn Oder.** “It’s appropriate that it should be part of the public discussion.”

“The need for Latinos to breathe fresh air and enjoy the breathtaking landscapes of the Chesapeake is greater than ever. Our research found that in the Chesapeake region, Latinos and other people of color are more than three times more likely to be deprived of nearby nature than white people. We applaud Senator Van Hollen and Representative Sarbanes’ proposed steps to provide more avenues for our communities to recreate outdoors, connect with nature, and spend time with their loved ones. Investing in nearby nature will create jobs, enrich our children’s

education, improve public health, protect from the climate emergency, and safeguard clean air, water, and a healthy environment for all,” **said Hispanic Access Foundation President and CEO Maite Arce.**

“Maryland League of Conservation Voters recognizes that making the Chesapeake Bay accessible to more people is integral in inspiring support for its protection and long term viability. We support the establishment of this new national recreation area as an opportunity to provide greater access to the Bay and education about its place as an invaluable resource for this region. We look forward to working with you to ensure that the Chesapeake is recognized for its natural and historic significance by inclusion in the National Park System,” **said Maryland League of Conservation Voters Executive Director Kim Coble.**

“We applaud Senator Chris Van Hollen and Rep. John Sarbanes for their leadership toward designating a Chesapeake National Recreation Area,” **said National Aquarium Chief Mission Officer Jennifer Driban.** “The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure, and this designation will formally recognize the significance of our nation’s largest estuary, increase investment that supports recreation and conservation, and foster better public access and connection across the diverse landscapes and communities of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. We appreciate and support the specific focus on expanding recreational opportunities among underserved communities and ensuring that the voices and stories of Indigenous peoples and communities of color are centered throughout the effort.”

“As Maryland’s oldest, largest, and most effective preservation organization, we work to protect Maryland’s unique and irreplaceable heritage. Establishing the Chesapeake Bay as a National Recreation Area helps to preserve this historic landscape and will celebrate the Bay’s diverse history and culture. We thank you for your leadership, and we strongly support the establishment of this new national recreation area, and we look forward to working with you to ensure that the Chesapeake is recognized for its natural and historic significance by inclusion in the National Park System,” **said Preservation Maryland President & CEO Nicholas Redding.**

“The CNRA is a big idea whose time has come. The Chesapeake Bay watershed is a natural wonder fully deserving of national park status. Preservation Virginia joins the growing coalition of preservation, conservation, recreational, and environmental organizations in Virginia and Maryland to support this effort,” **said Preservation Virginia CEO Elizabeth Kostelny.**

Additional endorsers include ABS Group, Ad Hoc, LLC, Alice Ferguson Foundation, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, American Sportfishing Association, Annapolis Green, Bay Paddle, Black by Nature, Blue Oyster Environmental LLC, Blue Water Baltimore, Brandywine Foundation, Capital Region Land Conservancy, Chesapeake Bay Commission, Chesapeake Bay Outward Bound School, Chesapeake Legal Alliance, Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB), Chispa Maryland, Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park, Coalition to Protect America's National Parks, Conservation International, Corazon Latino, Defensores de la Cuenca, DockShare, EcoLatinos, Elizabeth River Project, Friends of the Rappahannock, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, Healthy Planet LLC, Historic Annapolis, Inn at Tabbs Creek, James River Association, Latino Outdoors, Living Classrooms, Morgan State University P.E.A.R.L. Facility, National Park Trust, National Parks Conservation Association, National

Preservation Institute, National Recreation and Parks Association, Newport News Shipbuilding, NMMA, Northern Neck Planning District Commission, Outward Bound, Oyster Recovery Partnership, Park Institute of America, Potomac Conservancy, Public Lands Alliance, REI, Scenic Virginia, Scharle Outdoor Recreation Consulting, LLC, Severn River Association, Shellfish Growers of Virginia, Shenandoah National Park Trust, ShoreRivers (Chester, Choptank, Mile-Wye & Sassafras Riverkeepers), Sierra Club, Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project (SERCAP), Stratford Hall, Surfrider Foundation, Susquehannock Wildlife Society, The Conservation Fund, The Nature Conservancy, The Wilderness Society, Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse (U.S. Lighthouse Society), Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust, Virginia Interfaith Power & Light, Virginia Oyster Trail, Virginia Tourism, Visit Annapolis, Washington College, Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore, Waterkeepers Chesapeake, and Youth Sailing Virginia. Letters of support from many of these organizations can be found [here](#).